United Nations A/57/826–S/2003/637

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
10 June 2003
English
Original: French

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 14
Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Letter dated 6 June 2003 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Heads of State and Government of the Group of Eight (G8) adopted at Evian, as part of the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, a statement on securing radioactive sources, to which the G8 Action Plan is annexed.

The implementation of the G8 Action Plan, which is aimed at preventing acts of radiological terrorism through the malevolent use of radioactive sources, requires close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has a vital role to play in combating radiological terrorism.

On behalf of the French G8 Presidency, I have the honour to transmit to you the Statement and the Action Plan on securing radioactive sources, which are annexed herewith. I should be grateful if you would have them distributed as documents (see annex) of the General Assembly, under agenda item 14, and of the Security Council.

These documents are also the subject of a separate communication to IAEA in Vienna.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **de La Sablière**

03-39183 (E) 130603 160603

Annex to the letter dated 6 June 2003 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

NON PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
SECURING RADIOACTIVE SOURCES
A G8 STATEMENT

At Kananaskis, we, the Heads of State and Government of the eight major industrialised democracies and the Representatives of the European Union, endorsed six principles and launched the Global Partnership to prevent terrorists or those that harbour them from gaining access to weapons and materials of mass destruction. Today, at Evian, in another concrete demonstration of our commitment to theses principles, we have agreed to improve the security of radioactive materials. Radioactive sources are found in everyday life and have beneficial applications in medicine, agriculture, research, and industry. Certain poorly protected sources pose a real threat because they could be manipulated by terrorists to construct a radiological dispersion device or a " dirty bomb ". We commit ourselves to employing high standards that reduce the vulnerability of radioactive sources to acquisition by terrorists. We urge all countries to take measures to strengthen regulatory control of high-risk sources within their territories. In that context, we welcome the initiatives taken by G8 countries and the European Union aimed at developing an appropriate legal framework to this end.

We welcome the findings of the 2003 Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources. We also recognise the essential role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in combating radiological terrorism and endorse its efforts to establish international standards that ensure the long term security and control of high-risk radioactive sources. We have decided to undertake the following actions to reinforce and complement the IAEA's activities as well as to ensure the unavailability of radioactive sources to terrorists. The Group of Eight will:

1. Identify elements of the IAEA's Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources that are of the greatest relevance to preventing terrorists or those that harbour them from gaining access to high-risk radioactive sources.

2. Consider developing recommendations on how those elements could be applied at the national level. Those elements may include, as necessary:

2.1. National registers for tracking sources;
2.2. Programs for recovering orphan sources;
2.3. National regulations limiting export of high-risk sources to States that have effective controls;
2.4. Notification requirements to recipient States of exports;
2.5. National measures to penalise theft or misuse of radioactive sources;
2.6. National physical protection measures and access controls;and
2.7. National laws to ensure the safe and secure disposal of high-risk spent sealed sources

3. Work towards agreement on and implementation of these recommendations by the time of our next meeting in 2004.

4. Encourage all countries to strengthen controls on radioactive sources and observe the Code of Conduct when the revisions to it have been completed and approved.

5. Enhance international co-operation on locating, recovering, and securing high-risk radioactive sources.

6. Support and advance the IAEA's programs to improve the security of radioactive sources, including considering the provision of additional resources as necessary to the Nuclear Security Fund in order to promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct and the recommendations for its application.

7. In conjunction with the IAEA, convene an international conference in 2005, in France, to further discuss and raise awareness of the radioactive source problem, and to assess progress in implementing the findings of the 2003 International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources.

8. Continue to work on this issue and will review the implementation of the plan of action, as set out in the technical annex to this Statement, at the 2004 G8 Summit.

NON PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
SECURING RADIOACTIVE SOURCES
A G8 ACTION PLAN

1. Background

The risks associated with radioactive sources have been the subject of increasing attention for several years now, particularly by the IAEA, with respect to safety and possible radiological accidents. But 11 September 2001 highlighted the risk posed by the use of certain highly radioactive sources for malevolent or terrorist purposes, i.e. the exposure of populations to radiation, or the use of one or more sources in a radiological dispersion device.

In either case, this could have a major psychological impact on the population, going well beyond the actual radiological or chemical consequences produced-which would themselves be limited. Consequently, the international community must imperatively concern itself with the question of the security of these sources.

2. G8 approach

The G8, recognising the vital need to strengthen arrangements for the prevention of acts of radiological terrorism, desires to give a strong political impetus to the consideration of this issue. The Evian Summit provides an occasion for the G8 to express international awareness of this issue at the highest level, to reaffirm its support for the IAEA work in this domain, to call on States to mobilise to improve the safety and security of the sources they produce, possess, use, import or export, and to develop a medium- and long-term approach aimed at reinforcing the security of sources and the mechanisms for co-operation between States.

The G8 welcomes the initiatives taken by G8 countries and the European Union aimed at developing a legal framework for the registration, administration and control of radioactive sources. This work, performed in close co-operation with the IAEA, can provide a valuable input to wider international efforts in this area.

The utilisation of radioactive sources yields important benefits in many peaceful applications (including medicine, agriculture, the environment, industry, and so forth). Conscious of the vulnerability of many States with regard to the control and monitoring of sources used in these applications, the G8 agreed on the following approach to strengthen the safety and security of radioactive sources:

2.1 Support of the IAEA work

The Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources represents an essential feature of the IAEA work. The G8 encourages as many States as possible to observe the principles contained in the Code when the revisions to it have been completed and approved, with a view to improving national systems for the control of sources. The G8 lends its political support to the Agency for the implementation of its action in this field. It undertakes to promote the application of the Code of Conduct, collectively or individually, when the revisions to the Code have been completed and approved, and to encourage States to request the assistance of the Agency in this sphere (see Document 1-Support of the IAEA work).

2.2 Support for the most vulnerable States

The G8 States are mobilising individually or in partnership, notably with the IAEA, to assist the most vulnerable States in taking steps to account and securely manage all high-level radioactive sources in their territory, including the search for and securing of sources no longer under regulatory control. They call on the other producers or exporters of highly radioactive sources to do likewise. They will exchange information and consult to review progress achieved in this sphere.

2.3 Mechanisms for the control of radioactive sources

The G8 undertakes to carry out a long term review of the means to strengthen control over radioactive sources and international co-operation in this sphere. The following avenues in particular are being explored:

2.3.1 Political commitments by States producing, possessing, using, importing or exporting radioactive sources to uphold the "principles of safe and secure management of radioactive sources", inspired by the relevant sections of the IAEA Code of Conduct (see Document 2-Political commitment by States producing, exporting and holding radioactive sources).

2.3.2 Identification of the elements of the completed Code of Conduct that are of the greatest relevance in preventing terrorism and encouragement to implement them world-wide. These may include national registers for radioactive sources, national measures to penalise thief or misuse of such sources and national physical protection and access control measures (see Document 3-Recommendations to States on the security of radioactive sources).

2.4 International conference on radioactive sources
The G8 welcomes the success of the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources held in Vienna on 11-13 March of this year, which emphasised in its findings the necessity of improving the control and security of radioactive sources at the national level and called for international initiatives in this sphere

It supports the proposal by France to hold in France, in the first half of 2005, the fourth international conference on this topic and to include both the safety and the security aspects of radioactive sources, in order to review the actions undertaken and to map out perspectives for the future (see Document 4-International Conference on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources). This conference will also serve to support the actions already in progress (e.g. IAEA programmes, and bilateral and multilateral co-operation), encouraging all national and international players in their chosen course.

Document 1

Support of the IAEA work

The G8 reaffirms its support for the actions undertaken by the IAEA in favour of the safety and security of radioactive sources, and declares its readiness to co-operate with the Agency on this issue.

More specifically,

1. The G8 contributes financially to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund and is co-operating with the Agency through contributions in kind, within the framework of the programme for protection against nuclear and radiological terrorism, via inter alia the secondment of experts, training programmes, evaluation on request of national systems for the control of sources, participation in campaigns for the detection and securing of uncontrolled sources, and in technical co-operation projects for the supply of equipment for the detection of illegal movements of radioactive sources (as part of the fight against the illicit trafficking in radioactive materials).

2. The G8 members will promote - individually and collectively - the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources when the revisions to it have been completed and approved, and invite States to work through the Agency for its application.

3. The G8 will consider requests for assistance from the Agency in response to a radiological accident or malevolent act, to secure the incriminated source(s) and, where necessary, to treat persons who have been radiated by these sources. It will also consider requests for assistance, as needed, for preventive actions (e.g. the search for and securing of sources).

4. The G8 will consider supplying to the IAEA the information at its disposal concerning particular emergency situations involving a radioactive source, or information liable to assist the Agency in dealing with such emergency situations where so requested. It will also consider similar request from non IAEA members.

Document 2

Political commitments by States producing,
exporting and holding radioactive sources

1. Radioactive sources are used in a wide range of applications, including agriculture, the environment, industry, medicine, research and others. There are estimated to be several million radioactive sources of all kinds and sizes disseminated around the world

The great majority of these sources present no serious threat, even if they should be handled with the customary caution: this notably applies to smoke detectors or instrument calibration sources. Certain sources, on the other hand, call for strict safety and security measures owing to their highly radioactive nature. The main objectives are to prevent malevolent acts (theft, sabotage, or transformation into a radiological dispersion device) and avoid radiological accidents.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) considers that roughly a hundred countries lack the legislative and regulatory framework needed to control radioactive sources adequately.

2. The G8 Heads of State and Government appeal to the international community of States, calling upon them to:
2.1. Account for the sources in their possession on their territory,
2.2. Take steps (where necessary with the assistance of the IAEA) to secure all high level radioactive sources,
2.3. Search for, locate and secure sources believed missing ("orphan" sources).

This short and medium-term approach being conducted by States at the national level may be accompanied by international co-operation aimed at the most vulnerable States. The work performed by G8 countries and the European Union aimed at developing, in close co-operation with the IAEA, a legal framework for the registration, administration and control of radioactive sources can provide a valuable input to wider international efforts in this area.

3. International assistance is being intensified under the auspices of the IAEA. This may take the following forms, and in particular:
3.1. Campaigns to search for and locate orphan sources, based on information gathered locally or from the initial producer and/or exporter of these sources,
3.2. Securing these sources on-site and, in extreme circumstances, evacuating them to specialised facilities,
3.3. Install appropriate instruments at border crossings and strategic points which aim to detect illegal movements of radioactive materials.

4. These assistance missions, which are liable to take place over an extended period of time, may be implemented with the aid of international financing (via the G8 Global Partnership, the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund, European or national funding, etc).

5. The States that produce and distribute radioactive sources have a special responsibility with regard to the safety and security of these sources. The G8 initially, and subsequently the other producer and exporting States as well, will give consideration to the type and nature of commitment the radioactive source producer and/or exporting States might enter into.

This commitment could take the form of an individual declaration by these States to the IAEA, in which they affirm their determination to uphold the "principles of safe and secure management of radioactive sources".

Document 3

Recommendations to States on the security of radioactive sources

1. The IAEA Code of Conduct contains points contributing to the safety or the security of radioactive sources, or both. In its findings, the International Conference in Vienna, in March 2003, also identified points that ought to help strengthen the security of radioactive sources and render terrorist access to these sources more difficult.

The G8 proposes that these points be considered by States in implementing control and monitoring systems within their territory.

2. The G8 will direct a working group to identify those elements of the IAEA Code of Conduct that are of greatest relevance to prevent terrorists from gaining access to radioactive sources and to develop recommendations for national consideration on the implementation of those elements, in close consultation with the IAEA. These recommendations will take into account the findings of the 2003 International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources and could consider addressing, in particular, the following:

2.1. Establishing a national register to track sources throughout their life-cycle,
2.2. Setting up an outline for creating a national mechanism for the recovery and securing of "orphan" or poorly-controlled sources within their national territory,
2.3. Establishing a series of guidelines with respect to the control of exports of sources, conditions attaching to them, and mechanisms (e.g. notifications) for monitoring these exports,
2.4. Developing national measures as necessary to combat malevolent acts involving radioactive sources,
2.5. Identifying possible measures to be taken by the State in order to safeguard and restrict access to sources,
2.6. Identifying measures that the State could take regarding the conditioning and/or encouraging the recycling of sources at the end of their life,
2.7. Putting in place a system which aims to detect the passage of radioactive sources at strategic points such as border crossings.

Document 4

International Conference on the Safety and the Security of Radioactive Sources

1. The international Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources held in Vienna in March 2003, co-chaired by Russia and the United States, set in motion a process for reinforcing and accelerating international co-operation in the field of safety and security of radioactive sources, and more especially from the standpoint of security. But it also follows on from the previous international conferences on safety and security held in Dijon (France) in 1998 and in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 2001.

2. Over the next two years, it would be desirable to consolidate the political impetus given to this issue in 2003 (through the Vienna Conference in March and the Evian Summit in June). A progress report should be drawn up on action taken to secure radioactive sources by:

2.1. The competent international organisations, e.g. the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the World Customs Organisation (WCO), Interpol, the European Commission, etc.,

2.2. States, at both national as well as bilateral and multilateral levels: safety and/or security authorities, export control bodies, customs administration, public or private agencies or enterprises with expertise in the field of radioactive sources (management, detection, search and location, securing, etc).

3. Consultations should be conducted, after the Evian Summit, with the main States concerned in order to give substance to the initiatives launched. In particular, the proposals aimed at making sources more secure need to be refined: these could include inter alia recommendations made on the basis of measures contained in the IAEA Code of Conduct and of the findings of the March 2003 International Conference. Consideration will also be given to the need to launch campaigns to secure poorly-controlled radioactive sources, and to search for, locate and secure "orphan" radioactive sources, with international funding (mainly via the G8 Global Partnership and the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund). National expert groups could meet to discuss these themes at the IAEA in the second half of 2003 and in 2004.

4. France will organise a fourth conference in the first half of 2005, which will draw up a progress report on the process begun in 2003. This conference could work according to the following guidelines:

4.1. Consolidating the IAEA's international efforts with regard to radioactive sources (via its Action Plan, Code of Conduct, assistance in the detection of illicit trafficking in radioactive materials, campaigns to locate orphan sources, and so on), and States in their national initiatives, as well as supporting bilateral and multilateral co-operative ventures,
4.2. Evaluating the main projects in progress,
4.3. Preparing a provisional assessment of the campaigns to secure poorly-controlled sources (covering safety and security aspects), and campaigns to search for, locate and secure orphan sources.
4.4. This conference would be attended by all of the aforementioned operational actors concerned by this issue.